

# Judge: Tests May Tell on King



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Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s wife, Coretta Scott King, and son Dexter King were at yesterday's court hearing.

AP Photo

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
Memphis, Tenn., that could determine if the rifle killed the 1968, a judge set to lead to a trial for the convicted assassin.  
Tennessee Judge now he review Appeals before that test in an plea and go to the Brown could will make its re Ray, 68, pleaded reversed himself been requesting set up to be the Ray says the scene with his conspirators bought the rifle Memphis on in runner he knew never establish Ray, who is suffering and is suffering say is terminal, a trial from civil family of King, King, and son Dexter Ray on trial.  
"Even if no concerning my

# Tests May Tell on Rifle

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we and the nation can have the satisfaction of knowing that justice has run its course in this tragedy." Coretta Scott King said at yesterday's hearing.

Robert Hathaway, an assistant forensics examiner for Rhode Island, said new technology could prove whether Ray's rifle fired the shot that killed King on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in April, 1968.

That technology is a scanning electron microscope, which Hathaway said wasn't available until the mid-1980s.

"Knowing that the magnification is much greater and better it is an additional tool that can be used to possibly resolve the conflict over whether it was fired from this gun," said Hathaway, who spent 17 years in the crime lab for the Connecticut State Police.

Hathaway said the FBI used technology available at the time to test the bullet and rifle, but there has been "no matching of the death slug to the

rifle itself."

The U.S. House Select Committee on Assassinations had the King rifle tested in the 1970s, but because the slug was so mangled, could not establish beyond a scientific doubt that it was the murder weapon.

Tests showed, however, that King was killed by the same kind of gun and that lead in the death slug matched unspent bullets found with the rifle.

Hathaway proposed a committee of three firearms experts fire test shots from the weapon and compare those with the bullet in evidence.

Ray's attorney, William Pepper, said he expects the tests on the rifle "to exclude it for all time as the murder weapon."

Before the hearing, prosecutors had said Ray has used up his appeals in Tennessee courts.

"He's the confessed killer. Nothing else out there can really be looked upon as credible evidence," said John Campbell, a state prosecutor.